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federal government is going to hold to the schedule that they currently have in the federal estate tax. Because I'm reading that they have fiscal problems of their own, and I think that they're going to find that the proposed changes in the federal estate tax are things that they can't afford. So I would rather be cautious about this. I would rather not have a tax cut now that I don't know that I can afford, and, quite frankly, I would wait and see what the federal government is going to do. You have plenty of time to follow along if you want to. You can easily do that in two...as late as the 2004 Session of the Legislature.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: I...I don't see any reason to follow along in this...in this process where the federal government erodes our tax base and we just follow along and say, that's good enough for me. I don't know if we can afford the tax cut that you're proposing, and...and I think that that decision should wait until 2004.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Kristensen, members of the Legislature, I cannot support the amendment, and Senator Wickersham has made known to you the fiscal impact and I suppose that's the most important argument. But why in the world would you ever want to follow the federal government in what they've done in this area? This is the most ludicrous series of laws I've ever seen. I mean first they almost phase out the federal estate tax entirely, and then they bring the entire thing back in again, just like it is...just like it was a year or two ago. I...I challenge anybody here to tell me what sense the federal estate tax law makes, the way the Federal Congress has done it. It's a bunch of political bunk, and we shouldn't be following it at all. We should just take the consistent course that Senator Wickersham has set out for us and do exactly that, instead of trying to follow a...follow a federal government that makes no sense at all and whose result is purely a result of partisan politics, period. Thank you.